(f) whether the work has been abandoned;

(g) if so, the reasons therefor;

(h) whether there is any fresh move to exploit this mineral wealth; and

(i) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI BIRENDRA PRASAD BAISHYA) : (a) to (i). Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Demand for Railway Station

2933. SHRI RUP CHAND PAL : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware about the long standing demand for a Railway Station at Khusigachi, place between Baidyaabati and Bhadreswar in the Howrah Division of the Eastern Railway; and

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to expedite the matter?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b). The proposal for opening of passenger halt at Khurigachi between Baidyabati and Bhadreswar stations has been examined but not found justified on operational, engineering and financial grounds. Besides, the proposal has also not been found justified on passenger amenity grounds due to availability of other modes of transport for people to commute in that area.

Demand Of More Funds For Development of Tourism

2934. SHRI MURALIDHAR JENA : Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government of Orissa has demanded more funds from the Union Government for the develepment of some particular tourist spots;

(b) if so, the details thereof during the last two years; and

(c) the amount released, scheme-wise?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SRIKANTA JENA): (a) Each year the Department of Tourism in consultation with the State Government officials prioritises projects for Central Financial Assistance. These projects are identified on the basis of their merits inter-se-priority and availability of funds. The Department of Tourism has prioritised 8 projects at an estimatd cost of Rs. 250 lakhs for Central Financial Assistance during 1996-97 to Orissa.

(b) and (c). The detail of projects sanctioned and the amount released to Orissa during the last two years is enclosed In the statement

STATEMENT

Projects/Schemes Sanctioned During 1994-95

Sl. No.	Name of the project/scheme	Amount sanct-ioned (Rs. in	Amount relea-sed lakhs)
Orissa			
1.	Tourist cemplex at Hirakund	40.39	14.62
2.	Tourist lodge at Rayagada	25.20	1.00
3.	Tourist complex at Narsingnath	41.23	1.00
4.	Tourist complex at Korapat	42.43	7.00
5.	Illumination of Sea Beach at Puri	5.46	3.00
6.	Beach Festival 1994	10.00	8.00
7.	Rajaseri Festival 1995	1.60	1.00
	Total	166.31	35.62

Projects/ Schemes Sanctioned For The Year 1995-96

Orissa			
1.	Amentities Centre at Dhauli	20.26	10.00
2.	Tourist lodge at Badarama	36.41	18.00
3.	Floating restaurant at Barkal	42.89	21.00
4.	Beach cleaners equipment Puri, Orissa.	9.30	5.00
	Total	108.86	54.00

Gauge Conversion

2935. SHRI K. KANDASAMY : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have approved conversion of Salem to Kashmir via Ranchipuram and Namakkal Meter Gauge line into Broad Gauge; and

(b) if so, the time by which the work is likely to be started?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) and (b) There is no such project of conversion of Salem to Kashmir line. However, a Broad Gauge route is already available connecting Salem and Jammu.

Abandoned Vehicles in MTNL, Delhi

2936. SHRI G.M. KUNTURKAR : Will the Minister of COMMINUCATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) whether several vehicles in MTNL, Delhi have been abandoned by the Nigam and its drivers are sitting idl

(b) if so, the details thereof and reasons therefor;

(c) whether some private vehicles are being put use in place of these abandoned vehicles;

(d) if so, the number of vehicles avandoned by the Nigam and also the number of vehicles hired privately to meet the requirement and the monthly amount involved in hiring these private vehicles; and

(e) the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA). (a) No Sir. Several vehicles have been scrapped but their drivers are not sitting idle, since the scrapped vehicles are kept on the road till their replecements are received.

(b) Not applicable in view of (a) above.

(c) No Sir.

(d) 69 vehicles have been scrapped from April, '95 to November, 96. Vehicles are hired to meet operational requirements as per the justification. At present 167 vehicles have been hired. The monthly expenditure is Rs. 17 lakhs approximately.

(e) All scrapped vehicles are being replaced by new vehicles in a phased manner.

Delivery of Telephone Bills

2937. SHRI R.L.P. VERMA Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government have floated open tenders for delivery of telephone bills to the subscribers in South Delhi area during June, 1996;

(b) if so, whether the Government have subsequently floated limited tenders from the selected and limited contractors already in the list of the Department of Telecommunications;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the reasons for floating open tenders and subsequently limited tenders thereof?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Limited tenders for delivery of bills for a period one month to three months were called for the South-I & South-II areas from the selected contractors including the contractors already working for the South areas of MTNL.

(c) Total 9 offers for South-I area and 8 offers for South-II area were received. The limited tenders were not finalised since the matter was subjudice. The bills were sent by Post through Post Offices.

(d) As the earlier contract had already expired, open tenders were floated to approve fresh contractors to deliver the bills to the customers premises. Anticipating some delay in finalisation of open tenders, limited tenders were called for the delivery of bills for a period of 1 to 3 months pending finalisation of open tender.

Pension Scheme for ITDC Employees

2938. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of TOURISM be please to state :

(a) whether the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) has introduced a pension scheme for its employees;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the date of its commencement; and

(c) the categories of employees covered under this scheme?

THE MINISTER OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRI SHRIKANTA JENA) : (a) India Tourism Development Corporation has not framed/ introduced any pension scheme for its employees.

(b) and (c). Do not arise.

Air Buses out of use

2939. SHRI K.D. SULTANPURI : Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state :

(a) how many Air Buses are out of use and since when;

(b) when they will be repaired and put into operation;

(c) whether any of them have been purchased by N.R. Is; and

(d) the details of the transaction undertaken by them?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI C.M. IBRAHIM) : (a) None of the Air Bus aircraft with Air India and Indian Airlines is out of use.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

[Translation]

Cancellation of Trains

2940. SHRI SOHANBEER :
SHRI K. PARASURAMAN :

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of mail and passenger trains temporarily/permanently cancelled in the country during the last three years, zone-wise and location-wise;

(b) the reasons for their cancellation;